

Interim Report on the Female Offender Re-Entry Program

Department of Health and Family Services
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Executive Summary

This report presents data on the 35 clients who were enrolled in the Female Offender Re-Entry Program (FOREP) from August 20, 2004, through March 31, 2006. FOREP is part of the Governor's KidsFirst Initiative, and is a collaboration between the Wisconsin departments of Corrections and Health and Family Services. FOREP provides services to female offenders who have substance use treatment needs to facilitate their successful reintegration back into the community after they are released from prison. FOREP is designed to provide many services to the children of FOREP clients as well. Several aspects of reintegration were evaluated. These included: reunification with children, employment, living arrangement, substance use and recidivism.

FOREP Participants. As of March 31, 2006, 9 of the 35 clients were still in prison participating in the reach-in phase of the program, and 26 had been released to the community. Fifteen of the clients who had been released from prison met the criterion of having at a minimum a 6-month follow-up period that could be used to evaluate family reunification and community reintegration outcomes. The information presented in this report on family reunification and community reintegration outcomes at 6 months reflects the experience of these 15 women.

FOREP Services during the Incarceration

During incarceration clients may receive two types of services through FOREP. These are recovery support coordination reach-in visits and services to help facilitate their reintegration back into the community, and monthly visits from their minor children.

Recovery Support Coordination Services. All 35 FOREP enrollees received reach-in visits from their Recovery Support Coordinator (RSC) while they were incarcerated. Reach-in visits and recovery support coordination services are intended to occur throughout the 6 months preceding the release to the community. The length of time that clients participated in the reach-in phase of FOREP ranged from 9 to 284 days. The average time for reach-in was 112 days (3.7 months). Problems identifying clients at least 6 months prior to their scheduled release date is the primary reason why most clients did not receive the full 6-months of reach-in services.

Children's Services. Four of the 26 FOREP clients who were released prior to March 31, 2006, received children's visits funded by the state. A total of 41 state-funded visits were provided involving the 9 children who visited their mothers in prison during the reach-in period.¹

During the FOREP pilot and through FY 2006, state-funded children's visits were provided using previously existing funding, meaning that the only state-funded visits were among families with open Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW) cases. In June 2006, a FOREP workgroup consisting of DHFS, DOC, Milwaukee County and stakeholder representatives identified vendors that would be willing to provide

¹ FOREP clients may have also received informal visits from their children that were not paid for with State funds (e.g., during a visit with other relatives). The evaluation did not track informal visits.

assessment, treatment and other support services to children, and they are currently planning for the implementation of these children's services. Milwaukee County signed a contract with St. Rose Youth and Family Center to provide FOREP funded in-prison children's visits in June, 2006. Milwaukee County staff indicate that they expect FOREP-funded children's visits and other services to begin in fall 2006.

FOREP Reintegration Outcomes in the Community

At the 6-month follow-up point, among the 15 clients who had a minimum 6-month follow-up period:

- Most clients still had custody of their children; however, only one-third had been reunified with all of their minor children.
- 46.7% of the clients were employed².
- 66.6% of clients were living independently in the community³.
- None of the 12 clients who were in the community were using alcohol or other drugs.
- 13.3% of the clients had recidivated and been returned to prison⁴.

Family Reunification. At the 6-month follow-up point, one-third (5 of 15) of the clients with a minimum 6-month follow-up period were reunified with all of their minor children, 2 clients were reunified with some, but not all of their minor children and the remaining 8 clients (53.3%) were not reunified with any of their minor children.

Custody. Most of the 15 clients retained custody of their children. Two clients had their parental rights to their children terminated after their release from prison. One client lost legal custody of her only child and the other lost legal custody of all 3 of her children. In all cases, these children were adopted. The termination of the parental rights of a child of 1 additional client was pending at the 6-month follow-up point.

Employment Status. One-third (33.3%) of the FOREP client's were employed at 1 month post release to the community. Among the clients with a 6-month follow-up period available, nearly half (7 or 46.7%) were employed at 6 months following prison release, 2 (13.3%) were participating in a W-2 job training program, 3 (20%) were unemployed and 3 (20%) were in correctional custody (2 in prison and 1 in county jail).

² Comparative data from the first quarter of 2006 on other Wiser Choice clients indicates that FOREP clients had somewhat higher rates of employment at 1 month (33.3%) than did Wisconsin DOC Alternative to Incarceration clients (20%) and General Population clients (28.2%) with AODA needs. FOREP clients had the same rate of employment as compared with other DOC Re-Entry clients who did not receive enhanced services (33.3%).

³ Comparative data from the first quarter of 2006 on other Wiser Choice clients indicates that FOREP clients had higher rates of independent living at 1 month (70.8%) than did Wisconsin DOC Alternative to Incarceration clients (50%), General Population clients (54.9%) with AODA needs, and other DOC Re-Entry clients who did not receive enhanced services (58.3%).

⁴ Recent historical Department of Corrections' recidivism data on female offenders released to Milwaukee County during CY 1999 through 2003 indicate that 16.3% recidivated within 12 months of prison release. The recidivism rate within 6 months is not available.

Living Arrangement. Most (17 or 70.8%) clients were living independently 1 month following prison release. Among the clients with a 6-month follow-up period available, at the point 6 months following release from prison, two-thirds (10 or 66.6%) of the clients were living independently, 1 client was living in a dependent, temporary or transitional setting, 1 client was a transient, and 3 clients were in correctional custody (i.e., 2 in prison and 1 in county jail).

Alcohol and/or Other Drug Use. Among the 15 clients who could be followed for at least 6 months, 12 clients were in the community and 3 were in correctional custody at the 6-month follow-up point. None of the 12 clients who were residing in the community were using any alcohol or other drugs at the 6-month follow-up point. The self-reported substance use data reported in the available assessments of 10 of these 12 clients (83.3%) indicated that they were sober at every point when data were collected (e.g., at intake, and at 1 to 13 months post intake). The remaining 2 clients were sober at 6 months, but used alcohol or other drugs at some point prior to or following the 6-month follow-up point.

Recidivism. Among the 15 clients who had a minimum 6-month follow-up period, 2 had recidivated and been returned to prison. This is a 13.3% recidivism rate within 6-months of prison release. One additional client was in county jail at the 6-month follow-up point, but she was not revoked and returned to prison, but rather, was subsequently returned to the community as an alternative to revocation.

Conclusions. It is premature to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of FOREP. Relatively few clients have been released to the community and the follow-up period that is available on these clients is insufficient to reliably evaluate reintegration, recidivism and reunification outcomes. In addition, the program has still not been fully implemented, since very few children's services have been provided. The FOREP contract for children's in-prison visits has recently been signed. Vendors for core treatment and other services which are to be provided to children have just been identified, and their contracts are being amended to include services to FOREP children. FOREP funded in-prison visits and children's treatment services are expected to begin fall 2006.

FOREP Design, Target Population and Goals

FOREP Design. As part of the Governor's KidsFirst Initiative to Break the Cycle of Incarceration, Wisconsin has implemented an initiative to safely reintegrate female offenders back into the community. FOREP is a collaboration between the departments of Corrections and Health and Family Services.

FOREP enhances the Wiser Choice Program⁵ in Milwaukee County. FOREP targets women who have both a substance use disorder and dependent children. The enhanced services that are provided through FOREP are intended to support the efforts of formerly incarcerated mothers to successfully re-enter the community and reunite with their children. These services are further intended to break the cycle of crime, substance abuse, depression, family violence and trauma; to provide treatment for substance abuse; and to find suitable housing and employment for female offenders.

Each client is assigned a Recovery Support Coordinator (RSC) who serves as a care coordinator for the client and her family. The RSC, the client's parole agent and Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) treatment staff work as a multi-disciplinary team to provide continuity of services for the female offender and her family, from incarceration through release and community reintegration. The program places heavy emphasis on children's services which include prison visitation, mental health services, and support groups.

A primary focus of FOREP is on preparation for re-entry while incarcerated. Re-entry supports include care coordination, children's visitation, and development of integrated/wraparound supports with community based treatment services in order to provide the highest degree of community safety and best possible client outcomes. The core of the reintegration process focuses on developing a comprehensive reintegration plan that addresses all critical success factors and engages the inmate, her family, and a community support network. The goal is to better prepare the inmate for successful release and transition back into the community. The program design has four core components:

- *Children's Services:* All dependent children of mothers in FOREP will be given an at-risk assessment for safety and well-being by a trained professional. If children are receiving services through the Bureau of Milwaukee Child Welfare (BMCW), those services will not be duplicated through this program. After they are assessed for risk factors and necessary interventions are determined, the children will receive comprehensive support services to assist in keeping them safe within their homes, and facilitating the acquisition of parental post-incarceration resiliency factors, including mental health and permanency services. A prison visitation program based on the St. Rose Youth and Family Center Family Reunification Model is used to facilitate institutional visits for children and their mothers. It will also include a nurturing component and support groups for children and their caregivers.

⁵ The Wiser Choice Program is a federal three-year grant which provides substance abuse treatment to several types of clients in Milwaukee County, including correctional system clients.

- *Reach-in Services:* The program begins while offenders are still incarcerated and emphasizes intensive preparation for reentering the community. The program has a strong component of screening and comprehensive assessments in educational, vocational, child protective capacity, medical, and clinical areas.
- *Institution-Based Transition Activities:* Prior to release, if possible, FOREP clients participate in AODA treatment services. AODA treatment and support services are also provided post-release through the Wiser Choice program. Transition activities also include children's visitation, educational activities, benefits application, job readiness activities, development of community linkages, parenting and nurturing classes, development of reunification plans, community correctional supervision planning, secure housing, and formation of wraparound teams. This stage will begin at 6 months prior to the release date and involves the RSCs, who prepare community plans. RSCs are part of the contracted provider network of Wiser Choice. Milwaukee County contracts with St. Charles Youth and Family Services for recovery support coordination services for FOREP clients.
- *Community-Based Support Activities:* RSCs develop a single coordinated care plan with the family that determines roles and responsibilities of all formal and informal team members. The team continues to provide ongoing services and mentoring activities. Careful monitoring of progress, after release, is established to ensure achievement of program goals and community safety. Facilitating stronger family ties within the natural support system of the families is also an effective form of crime prevention and leads to safer communities. Family support may be able to lower criminal activity, to increase parole success, to reduce recidivism and lower intergenerational criminal activity.

Target Population. The FOREP target population is female offenders who:

- Intend to reside in Milwaukee County upon prison release;
- Have an identified substance abuse and/or substance abuse/mental health need;
- Have a dependent child under the age of 18 with whom they can be safely and successfully reunited;
- Have been convicted of non-violent crimes;
- Are approaching release from prison to supervision in the community; and
- Have diverse needs which may include employment, housing and basic daily living skills.

FOREP Goals. FOREP has several goals. These include:

- Reduce recidivism rates and reduce involvement with the criminal justice system
- Decrease substance use and improve mental health and well-being
- Increase the number of children that return home safely and achieve permanency with their mothers
- Improve vocational outcomes, increase employment and self-sufficiency
- Provide safe and stable housing and improve living situation

Interim Report Study Population

This interim report tracks the 35 clients who were enrolled in FOREP from August 20 2004, through March 31, 2006. The FOREP enrollment date was defined to be the date of the first in-prison reach-in visit by the RSC. This report presents data on program participation; services provided to children; and selected outcomes relating to family reunification, community reintegration, substance use and recidivism. Clients who were released from prison were followed for up to 6-months regarding community reintegration and recidivism outcomes. Fifteen clients had a full 6-month follow-up period available.

FOREP Enrollment and Duration of Program Participation

Enrollments. The DHFS Division of Disability and Elder Services (DDES) initiated FOREP by enrolling 5 pilot clients. The first pilot clients were enrolled in August 2004, and pilot client enrollment continued through February 2005. Enrollment of post pilot clients began in April 2005, with a goal of enrolling three clients each month. Thirty clients were enrolled from April 2005 through March 2006, which is 2.5 clients/month.

Table 1
FOREP Client Enrollment by Month through March 31, 2006

Enrollment Month	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients
August 2004	3	0	3
September 2004	1	0	1
February 2005	1	0	1
April 2005	0	3	3
May 2005	0	7	7
June 2005	0	4	4
July 2005	0	1	1
September 2005	0	8	8
October 2005	0	1	1
December 2005	0	2	2
January 2006	0	2	2
March 2006	0	2	2
Totals	5	30	35

In the early stages of program implementation, FOREP experienced difficulties identifying enough appropriate candidates for the program. These difficulties included identifying women with minor children and identifying women too late in their incarceration for them to be able to participate in the full 6 months of reach-in. Changes were made to the FOREP client identification process to remedy these problems. The client identification process initially began as women approached their release date and visitor lists were used to identify women with minor children. This process was changed,

and now, potential clients are identified as part of the prison intake assessment and evaluation admission process. This change facilitates more comprehensive client identification and improved reintegration planning.

As of March 31, 2006, among the 35 clients who had been enrolled, 9 were still in prison participating in the reach-in phase of the program and 26 had been released to the community.

Table 2
Status of FOREP Enrollees as of March 31, 2006

Client Status on March 31, 2006	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients	
			#	%
Reach-in Participant	0	9	9	25.7%
Active Wiser Client in the Community	0	10	10	28.6%
Closed	4	8	12	34.3%
Returned to Prison	1	2	3	8.5%
Closed and Re-enrolled	0	1	1	2.9%
Totals	5	30	35	100%

Duration of Reach-in. Comprehensive reach-in services are provided to facilitate a smooth transition back into the community. The reach-in phase of FOREP is intended to last for 6-months. Most clients (92.3%) were released from prison prior to receiving the full 6-months of reach-in services. Only 2 enrollees received at least 6 months of reach-in services. The length of time that clients participated in the reach-in phase of FOREP ranged from 9 to 284 days. The average time for reach-in was 112 days (3.7 months) and the median for reach-in time was 130 days (4.3 months). Problems identifying clients at least 6 months prior to their scheduled release date is the primary reason why most clients did not receive the full 6 months of reach-in services.

Table 3
Duration of Reach-in Services among FOREP Clients Enrolled by March 31, 2006

Reach-in Time	Pilot Clients (N=5)	Post Pilot Clients (N=30)	All Clients (N=35)
Less than 1 month	1	2	3 (11.6%)
1 to 2 months	2	3	5 (19.2%)
2 to 3 months	0	1	1 (3.8%)
3 to 4 months	0	3	3 (11.6%)
4 to 5 months	1	9	10 (38.5%)
5 to 6-months	0	2	2 (7.7%)
6 to 7 months	1	0	1 (3.8%)
9 to 10 months	0	1	1 (3.8%)
Average # Days of Reach-in	89	117	112

Duration of FOREP Community Participation Post Prison Release. Clients are eligible to participate in FOREP in the community for up to 2 years post prison release. Those clients who have been released from prison and closed have participated in FOREP community services for a much shorter time period. The 16 clients who were closed by March 31, 2006, averaged 156 days (5.1 months) of FOREP participation in the community. Clients must be active AODA treatment clients to be eligible to receive FOREP services while in the community. The program is voluntary.

Among the clients who closed prior to March 31, 2006, closure reasons were:

- Refusal to participate in treatment – 4 clients
- AWOL – 3 clients
- Client requested closure – 3 clients
- Returned to prison – 3 clients
- Completed treatment – 2 clients
- Client placed in jail – 1 client

Table 4
Duration of FOREP Participation in the Community among FOREP Clients Who Closed by March 31, 2006

Community FOREP Time	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients
Less than 3 months	0	6	6 (37.5%)
3 to 6 months	1	3	4 (25%)
6 to 12 months	3	2	5 (31.3%)
More than 12 months	1	0	1 (6.2%)
Average # Days	253	112	156

Children's Services

FOREP Children. Clients must have minor children with whom they could be reunited to be eligible for FOREP enrollment. The 35 FOREP enrollees had a total of 81 minor children with reunification possibilities. Each client had between 1 and 6 minor children. On average, clients had 2.3 minor children at their release from prison. About one-third (37.1%) had 1 minor child, 22.9% had 2 minor children, 22.9% had 3 minor children and 6 (17.1%) had more than 3 minor children. Children ranged in age from 1 to 17 upon the client's release from prison.

Children's Visits to FOREP Clients During Reach-in. A fundamental building block of FOREP is the provision of funded monthly in-prison visits between the offender and her children during the final 6 months of her incarceration, i.e., the reach-in period. This interim report identified all funded children's visits that were provided via St. Rose Youth and Family Center starting with FOREP enrollment through prison discharge. Funded visits were tracked among all FOREP clients who were released from prison through March 31, 2006. It is also possible that informal visits, not funded by the state may have been made by some children. Informal visits were not tracked by this study.

Data were also not collected on funded visits that may have been provided to the 9 clients who were still incarcerated on 3/31/06. Four of these 9 women had open BMCW cases and it is possible that they received funded children's visits that are not reflected in these statistics.

During the FOREP pilot and through FY 2006, funded children's visits were provided using previously existing funding, meaning that the only funded visits via St. Rose Youth and Family Center were among families with open BMCW cases. Among the 26 clients who were released from prison by March 31, 2006, 9 (35%) had open BMCW cases while incarcerated and their 26 children could have made funded in-prison visits to their mothers.

Four of the 5 pilot clients had open BMCW cases during their incarceration, and 2 of these pilot clients received children's visits during the last 6-months of their incarceration. Each of these women received visits from 1 of their minor children in prison using St. Rose Youth and Family Center services. Each child visited their mother 3 times.

Five of the 21 post pilot clients who had been released from prison prior to March 31, 2006 had open BMCW cases during their incarceration. Two of these post pilot FOREP clients received in-prison visits from their children that were funded by BMCW. All of the minor children of these 2 post pilot clients visited their mothers 1 or more times during the reach-in period of FOREP enrollment.

Table 5
Children's Funded In-Prison Visits during Reach-in

Client Status	Client Identifier	Age of Child at Client's Release from Prison	# of Funded Visits	# of Months Client was in Prison
Pilot	A	14	3	10.4 months
Pilot	B	9	3	51.3 months
Post-Pilot	C	8	8	22.3 months
	C	6	10	
Post-Pilot	D	1	7	23.1 months
	D	14	5	
	D	15	3	
	D	16	1	
	D	18	1	

In summary, 4 of the 26 FOREP clients who were released prior to March 31, 2006 received funded children's visits. A total of 41 visits were provided by the 9 children who visited their mothers during the reach-in period using St. Rose Youth and Family Center visitation services.

The legislature approved funding for FOREP, including children's visits as part of Act 25, the 2005-2007 biennial budget bill, which was enacted July 25, 2006. DDES initiated the ability of FOREP to begin to fund visitation service delivery by signing an addendum to the State/Milwaukee County contract on 12/12/05. The Milwaukee County Board approved the plan to contract with St. Rose Youth and Family Center on 2/7/06. The contract with St. Rose Youth and Family Center for children's visitation services was signed on June 6, 2006. This will enable the funding of in-prison visits by children who are not in families with open BMCM cases. Milwaukee County indicates that they expect FOREP funded children's visits to begin in fall 2006.

It should be noted that the St. Rose Youth and Family Center contracted rate for children's in-prison visitation services exceeds the projected rate in the budget for such services. The DHFS annual budget of \$27,700 was based on a projected rate of \$100 per visit, which could provide 277 children's visits per year. The contract with St. Rose Youth and Family Center provides a rate of \$275 per visit, which will fund 100 children's visits per year. In addition, the contract with St. Rose Youth and Family Center includes fees for other related services such as client orientation which will absorb a portion of the total funds, thereby reducing somewhat the amount available for children's visits.

Treatment and other Support Services for Children. A key building block of FOREP is the provision of a clinical assessment of each of the offender's children to identify mental health and/or AODA treatment needs among these children. If there are treatment needs, appropriate treatment and other supportive services are to be provided in order to break the cycle of substance abuse and recidivism and to address mental health issues and problems that are the result of the separation of the children from their mother during her incarceration.

FOREP has identified several services that children should receive to address their clinical needs and to facilitate family reintegration. These include:

- Recreation and socialization
- Family counseling
- Individual mental health services
- Children's trauma services
- Mentoring
- Academic adjustment
- Mental Health/AODA assessment
- Services for attachment disorders
- Services to address separation anxiety
- After school programs
- Camp
- Services provided through the parenting network

Milwaukee County has a diverse network of vendors under contract that could provide the above services. Children may receive assessment, treatment and other services via any vendor from the fee for service voucher network that is deemed to be appropriate to meet their needs. A FOREP workgroup, composed of representatives of DHFS, DOC,

Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division and stakeholders is evaluating how to best provide these children's services. This workgroup, called "Enhanced Program Operations Group" (EPOG) convened on April 21, 2006, to begin planning for the delivery of assessment, treatment and other services to FOREP children and to develop a protocol for the delivery of such services.

In May, 2006, Milwaukee County conducted a survey to identify local providers who could provide assessment and treatment services to FOREP children. In June, 2006, 10 treatment providers were identified who were capable of and willing to provide these necessary mental health and support services to the children of FOREP clients. Milwaukee County indicates that they are still in the process of planning for the implementation of children's mental health and support services. EPOG is currently making decisions regarding mental health and AODA treatment possibilities and requirements, and Milwaukee County plans to negotiate agreements with vendors for the delivery of these children's services in fall 2006.

Children's Services Currently Being Provided. As part of the Recovery Support Coordination, St. Charles Youth & Family Services currently refers all of the children of the incarcerated mothers for mentoring services. Those services are provided at no-cost through The Boys and Girls Club in Milwaukee. The Department of Corrections (DOC) Division of Community Corrections also provides referrals for services through the Parenting Network which has support groups for the children which are provided at no-cost to eligible families. Throughout the summer, the Milwaukee Public Schools System offers a variety of after school and summer camp programs available on a sliding scale or no-cost. Those referrals have started, and the activities were initiated at the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

Custody and Family Reunification Outcomes

The safe reintegration of the client with her children is a primary goal of FOREP. Among the 15 clients who had a minimum 6-month follow-up period, the study evaluated several dimensions of family reintegration. These were:

- Reunification – data were collected to determine if the client was living with her minor children at the 6-month follow-up point. This would include instances where the client was living independently with her children and also instances where the client moved into the setting where her children resided while she was incarcerated (e.g., with the grandparent who had physical custody of the client's children).
- Transfers of Guardianship - data were collected to determine if there were active transfers of guardianship on any of the client's minor children at the 6-month follow-up point. In many cases, guardianship of the client's children is transferred when the client is incarcerated and the party to which guardianship is transferred has legal, physical custody of the children. In cases with transfers of guardianship, the mother retains a role in making decisions about the welfare of the child.
- Termination of Parental Rights – data were collected to determine if the client's parental rights of her minor children had been terminated at the 6-month follow-up point. The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) includes statutory

deadlines requiring a court referral for a termination of parental rights (TPR) after a child has been in foster care for specified periods of time. Courts and judges also make decisions about terminating parental rights based on State laws and their assessment of the capability of the parent to properly care for the child and the child's best interests. Before children are legally free to be adopted, their birth parents' rights must be terminated. This can be done voluntarily or involuntarily and is generally irreversible.

Family Reunification. At the 6-month follow-up point, one-third (5 of 15) of the clients were reunified with all of their minor children. An additional 2 clients were reunified with some, but not all of their minor children. The remaining 8 clients (53.3%) were not reunified with any of their minor children at the 6-month follow-up point.

There were varied reasons why clients were not reunited with their children at the 6-month follow-up point. These were:

- Parental rights had been terminated and child(ren) had been adopted – 2 clients
- Guardianship had been transferred to the grandmother who had physical custody – 1 client
- Guardianship had been transferred to a prospective adoptive parent who had physical custody – 1 client
- Open BMCW case with children in Foster Care – 1 client
- Child(ren) living with their biological father – 2 clients
- Child placed in a Juvenile Correctional Institution – 1 client
- Open BMCW case with children in non-court ordered kinship care with the grandmother – 1 client
- Open BMCW case with 1 child in Foster Care; and 1 child whose guardianship had been transferred to the grandmother and where there was a termination of parental rights pending – 1 client

Table 6
Family Reunification Outcomes among FOREP Clients who were Released from Prison
at Least Six Months Prior to 3/31/06

Status Of Family Reunification 6 Months Following Prison Release	Pilot Clients (N=5)	Post Pilot Clients (N=10)	All Clients (N=15)
Reunified With All Minor Children	2	3	5 (33.3%)
Reunified With Some Of The Minor Children	1	1	2 (13.3%)
Reunified With None Of The Minor Children	2	6	8 (53.4%)

Transfers of Guardianship. At the 6-month follow-up point, there were no existing transfers of guardianship on the minor children of about half (53.4%) of the clients. There

were existing transfers of guardianship on some, but not all of the minor children of 2 clients. There were existing transfers of guardianship of all of the children of 3 clients and 2 clients had lost their parental rights to their minor children at the 6-month follow-up point. The children's court takes action to legally transfer guardianship to assure child health and safety.

Table 7
Status of Transfers of Guardianship Among FOREP Clients who Were Released from Prison at Least Six Months Prior to 3/31/06

Status Of Guardianship 6 Months Following Prison Release	Pilot Clients (N=5)	Post Pilot Clients (N=10)	All Clients (N=15)
No Transfers Of Guardianship An Any Minor Children	1	7	8 (53.4%)
Transfers Of Guardianship On Some, But Not All Minor Children	1	1	2 (13.3%)
Transfers Of Guardianship On All Minor Children	2	1	3 (20%)
Termination Of Parental Rights On All Minor Children	1	1	2 (13.3%)

Terminations of Parental Rights. Two clients had their parental rights to their children terminated post prison release. One client lost legal custody of her only child, and the other lost legal custody of all 3 of her children. In all cases, these children were adopted. The termination of the parental rights of 1 additional client was pending at the 6-month follow-up point. This TPR case involved only the youngest of her 3 children.

Table 8
Status of Parental Rights Among FOREP Clients who Were Released from Prison at Least Six Months Prior to 3/31/06

Status Of Client's Parental Rights 6 Months Following Prison Release	Pilot Clients (N=5)	Post Pilot Clients (N=10)	All Clients (N=15)
Client Has Parental Rights Of All Minor Children	3	9	12 (80%)
Parental Rights Were Terminated On All Minor Children Post Prison Release	1	1	2 (13.3%)
Termination Of Parental Rights Was Pending At 6-Months Post Prison Release	1	0	1 (6.7%)

Community Reintegration Outcomes

Outcomes. The study presents outcome data on two key dimensions of community reintegration following prison release. These are employment status and living arrangement. These outcome data came from the federally-required outcome reports that are produced as part of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), when available. GPRA assessment data are completed by the client's RSC. If the client was discharged prior to 6-months post release to the community, data were obtained from the client's parole agent.

Employment Status

The study tracked the employment status of clients at three points post prison release. These were: upon release to the community, at 1 month post release to the community, and at 6 months post release to the community.

Employment Status upon Release to the Community. Over half (53.8%) of the FOREP clients were unemployed upon their release to the community. Nearly one-fourth (23.1%) had jobs upon their release to the community. Data on employment status were unavailable on the remaining 6 clients. Among the clients who were missing data on employment status upon their release to the community, data were reviewed regarding their status at 1 month post release to the community. These data indicated that at 1 month post release to the community, 3 of these clients were unemployed, 2 were also missing data on their employment status and 1 client was working part-time.

Employment Status One Month Post Release to the Community. Over half (58.4%) of the FOREP clients were unemployed at 1 month post release to the community. One-third (33.3%) had jobs at 1 month post release to the community. Data on employment status was unavailable on the remaining 2 clients at both prison release and at 1 month post prison release.

Comparative data from the first quarter of 2006 on other Wiser Choice clients indicates that FOREP clients had somewhat higher rates of employment at 1 month (33.3%) than did Wisconsin DOC Alternative to Incarceration clients (20%) and General Population clients⁶ (28.2%). FOREP clients had the same rate of employment as compared with other DOC Re-Entry clients who did not receive enhanced services (33.3%).

Employment Status Six Months Post Release to the Community. Six months following release from prison, nearly half (7 or 46.7%) of the FOREP clients who could be followed for 6 months were employed. In addition, 2 clients (13.3%) were participating in a W-2 job training program. Three clients (20%) were unemployed and the remaining 3 clients were in correctional custody (2 in prison and 1 in county jail).

⁶ General population clients are people with AODA treatment needs who are not DOC clients. Approximately 75% of the Wiser Choice caseload is included in this category.

Table 9
Employment Status of FOREP Clients Following Prison Release

	Upon Prison Release (N=26)			1 Month Post Prison Release (N=24)			6-months Post Prison Release (N=15)		
Employment Status	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients
Employed Full Time	0	4	4 (15.4%)	0	2	2 (8.3%)	2	3	5 (33.4%)
Employed Part Time	0	2	2 (7.7%)	0	6	6 (25%)	0	2	2 (13.3%)
W-2 Job Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2 (13.3%)
Unemployed	1	13	14 (53.8%)	4	10	14 (58.4%)	2	1	3 (20%)
In Prison or Jail	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3 (20%)
Unknown	4	2	6 (23.1%)	1	1	2 (8.3%)	0	0	0

Living Arrangement

The study tracked the living arrangement of clients at two points post prison release. These were: at 1 month post release to the community, and at 6 months post release to the community. Data on the clients' living arrangement immediately upon release are not presented because the format of the GPRA question on this data element asks about the living arrangement during the past 30 days, and in all cases, this was prison.

Living Arrangement One Month Post Release to the Community. Most (17 or 70.8%) clients were living independently 1 month following prison release. Two clients (8.3%) were living in a dependent, temporary or transitional setting 1 month following prison release. Four clients (16.7%) were living in a dependent structured setting such as a halfway house or group home 1 month following prison release. Data on the living arrangement of the remaining client was unavailable.

Comparative data from the first quarter of 2006 on other Wiser Choice clients indicates that FOREP clients had higher rates of independent living at 1 month (70.8%) than did Wisconsin DOC Alternative to Incarceration clients (50%), General Population clients (54.9%), and other DOC Re-Entry clients who did not receive enhanced services (58.3%).

Living Arrangement Six Months Post Release to the Community. Two-thirds (10 or 66.6%) of the clients who had a 6-month follow-up period available were living independently 6 months following prison release. One client was living in a dependent, temporary or transitional setting and 1 client was a transient 6 months following prison release. The remaining 3 clients were in correctional custody 6 months following prison release.

Table 10
Living Arrangement of FOREP Clients Following Prison Release

	1 Month Post Prison Release (N=24)			6-months Post Prison Release (N=15)		
Living Arrangement	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients	Pilot Clients	Post Pilot Clients	All Clients
Independent ⁷	3	14	17 (70.8%)	4	6	10 (66.6%)
Dependent, Temporary or Transitional	1	1	2 (8.3%)	0	1	1 (6.7%)
Halfway House or Supervised Group Home	1	3	4 (16.7%)	0	0	0
Transient	0	0	0	0	1	1 (6.7%)
Prison/Jail	0	0	0	1	2	3 (20%)
Unknown	0	1	1 (4.2%)	0	0	0

Alcohol and Other Drug Use

One of the primary criteria for participation in FOREP is the presence of an identified AODA problem. Following prison release, all FOREP clients are required to participate in AODA treatment. They must remain active in treatment to continue their eligibility for FOREP services in the community.

Among those clients who had a minimum 6-month follow-up period, data were reviewed on substance use following their release from prison. The study used a standardized follow-up period and uniformly collected outcome data on substance use at the point 6 months following their release to the community. In addition, other available GPRA assessment data on substance use among this cohort were reviewed to evaluate overall substance use patterns post prison release. Most substance use outcome data came from the GPRA assessments completed by the client's RSC. Substance use data from the GPRA is self-reported to the RSC. If the client was discharged from FOREP prior to 6 months after being released to the community, 6-month substance use outcome data were obtained from the client's parole agent. DOC data on substance use comes from drug

⁷ Independent living is defined in the GPRA reporting instructions as "living on his/her own, self supported, with family or friends, or in non-supervised group homes".

testing done as a condition of parole supervision. The data reviewed indicated that most FOREP clients were successful in avoiding substance abuse.

Alcohol and/or Other Drug Use. Among the 15 clients who could be followed for at least 6 months, 12 clients were in the community and 3 were in correctional custody (prison or jail) at the 6-month follow-up point. None of the 12 clients who were residing in the community were using any alcohol or other drugs at the 6-month follow-up point. The self-reported AOD use data reported in the available GPRA assessments of 10 of these 12 clients (83.3%) indicated that they were sober at every point when data were collected (e.g., at intake, and at 1 to 13 months post intake).

Among the 2 clients who were still in the community at 6 months and who did not remain AOD abstinent throughout FOREP community participation:

- One client reported that she began using alcohol at 8 months post release. She was an active WIsar client in the community for 13 months. Her GPRA assessments at 8, 10 and 12 months and at close, reported heavy alcohol consumption, between 2 to 4 times per month. This was a pilot client.
- One client was using marijuana on nearly a daily basis (25 times/month) at 1 month post prison release. She was closed from FOREP 1 month later. As reported above, her parole agent indicated she was AOD abstinent at 6 months. This was a post-pilot client.

GPRA substance use outcome data were not available on the 3 clients who were in correctional custody at the 6-month follow-up point. Their substance use data came from DOC parole agents. DOC reported that:

- One client had no evidence of alcohol or drug use prior to her revocation and return to prison. This was a pilot client.
- One client tested positive for cocaine during the 6-month follow-up period. This was a post-pilot client.
- One client was abusing alcohol during the five months prior to her revocation and return to prison. This included alcohol abuse that was serious enough to require treatment at the Detoxification Center. This was a post-pilot client.

Table 11
Substance Use Post Prison Release Among Clients who Were Released from Prison at
Least Six Months Prior to 3/31/06

Substance Use Outcomes	Pilot Clients (N=5)	Post Pilot Clients (N=10)	All Clients (N=15)
Sober at 6 months and throughout FOREP participation	4	7	11 (73.3%)
Sober at 6 months, but used prior to 6 months	0	3	3 (20%)
Sober at 6 months, but used post 6 months	1	0	1 (6.7%)

Recidivism

The reduction of criminal behavior and the avoidance of recidivism are primary goals of FOREP. Recidivism is defined to be a reincarceration in prison. The reincarceration could be due to a new offense or the violation of rules of parole supervision. A permanent return to prison for either reason is very costly to the State⁸. Costs include direct costs to imprison the offender and costs to care for her children while she is incarcerated.

This interim report presents recidivism data on the FOREP clients who had been released from prison at least 6-months prior to March 31, 2006. Clients were followed for a standardized 6-month period.

Among the 15 clients who had a minimum 6-month follow-up period, 2 had recidivated and been returned to prison. This is a 13.3% recidivism rate within 6 months of prison release.

- One client was arrested for a new offense (prostitution). She was a pilot client.
- One client was revoked due to rules violations. She was a post pilot client.

One additional client was in county jail at the 6-month follow-up point. She had violated the conditions of her parole and had been placed in jail pending revocation. Her parole was not revoked and she was not returned to prison. She was subsequently returned to the community as an alternative to revocation. She is not classified as a recidivist in the computation of recidivism statistics in this interim report.

One additional client who had less than a 6-month follow-up period available as of March 31, 2006 recidivated. She was a post pilot client who was arrested for drug possession 10 weeks after her release from prison. She was revoked and returned to prison. She is not classified as a recidivist in the computation of recidivism statistics in this interim report since she was not part of the cohort that had a full 6-month follow-up period available.

Recent historical Department of Corrections' recidivism data on female offenders released to Milwaukee County indicate that 16.3% recidivated within 12 months of prison release⁹. The recidivism rate within 6 months is not available.

⁸ It is estimated that the average cost of a reincarceration is \$83,375.

⁹ Recidivism rate is based on all Milwaukee County females released during CY 1999 through 2003.